642 number of the leading men of the country had become more or less independent of the king. As we shall see in the historical survey (p. 166 [not translated]), the government recognized the independence of a few of these chiefs after the death of old King Kisabo. Even there, however, the people still regard the distant king -- who it is true has become almost a phantom for them -- as the supreme authority of the realm in many respects, especially in religious matters.

643 Theoretically, the king is the absolute ruler of all of Urundi. Whoever does not submit to him is a renegade and a revolutionary. In the last analysis this claim to royal supremacy is founded on the fact that the king is descended from the old ruling family, the Baganwa, and is regarded and revered as an almost divine being. In this capacity he is the head of the national religion and the religious head of the nation, regardless of the personal characteristics of the king who is ruling at any one time. If, in addition to the religious respect which he enjoys, the king is prudent and strong-willed, as the bearer of the "crown" he will have no difficulty in enforcing his claim to be the sole ruler in the whole of Urundi. This is proved by the history of Urundi.

In both Urundi and Ruanda, also in Ufipa (No. 47, p. 29), the official title of the king is umwami, i.e., he who rose to authority. The Urundi king is also referred to as the njen' ingoma, the possessor of the (holy) drum, or as umvijéji, father, master.

644 The person closest to the king is the umufumu w'umwami,
● [793] the "house chaplain," high priest. Generally he is a highly intelligent man who in all cases is attached to the semidivine king and who also is the first to advise him in mundane matters.
[791] A "court kiranga," a chief magician or sorcerer, assists the high priest. Among the officials of the court, there are masters of the kitchen, butchers, firewood keepers, stable masters, water suppliers, cow milkers, night watchmen, the bodyguard, and others. As far as political personalities are concerned, there are in the entourage of the king representatives of the great head men, the governors of the provinces, just as at the court of Musinga of Ruanda. Here, as well as in Ruanda, it is often the governors themselves who temporarily or permanently are drawn

776 king, the amulets, the oracle animals, the sacred spear, etc.
[778] (No. 19, p. 214). The same applies to Ruanda (No. 44, pp. 284; No. 39, pp. 102, 109). Imana is given a number of different names or is identified with other gods, depending on his different characteristics and functions. This is also true in
[551] Ruanda. Children are often given names which contain the word Imana: [121] Kaimana, little Imana; Mbonimana, gift of Imana; Ndorimana, appearance of Imana; Keschimana, ornament of Imana (No. 23, 1913, p. 308). Both men and
[842] women, if they wish to have offspring, wear an impusu y'Imana, a garment of Imana, made of reddish barkcloth with black circles painted on it. Imana is the supreme god of all manes, of all ancestral spirits, and thereby has the character of an old national god.

Although Imana as the sole creator of the world ranks high above the other gods, one nevertheless cannot describe this as a monotheistic concept of the Barundi, as is done by some missionaries (No. 44, p. 283). Nor is it correct to attempt to see a kind of "Trinity" in the fact that, besides Imana, the Barundi have two supreme gods, Rikiranga and Riangombe, whom they often identify or confuse with Imana (No. 19, p. 214). This is to put Christian interpretations on the matter, and these are foreign to the thinking of the Barundi.

It appears that Kiranga or Rikiranga ranks closest to Imana. If Imana is described as the supreme head of the high ancestral spirits, Kiranga is the ruler of all the lesser demons and of all things material. For this reason von der Burgt describes him as a kind of "logos payen" (No. 19, p. 216). He is the god to whom people appeal first for assistance in all worldly matters. It is Kiranga to whom the priestly cult of the crowds is devoted, to him the ceremony of the "sacred spear" is dedicated (see p. 134), and the high priest calls himself Kiranga for he is "possessed" by him, he is his medium (p. 123). To all appearances he is a deity of the old Bantu population and has remained
776 quite free of Batussi influence. The missionaries refer to
778 Kiranga as the "devil" (No. 23, 1904, p. 123). It is said that
793 near Mujaga in central Urundi Kiranga possesses two large herds

776 of cattle led by two sacred steers. He is thought to have a sacred
778 mountain administered by a priestess who wields great influence
793 and is even immune to the power of the king, although the latter keeps her under constant guard so as to insure that she fulfills her cult duties. If she neglects her duties, she and her closest relatives are executed upon the order of the king. Her office, it is said, begins and ends with the reign of the king, for after the king's death she has to take poison.

776 Father Gassldinger describes Kiranga as the "great
782 destroyer," the Lucifer of the Barundi. People appeal to him first in all their afflictions, misery, and fear, and it is to him that most sacrificial huts (akararo) are dedicated. Inside these huts there is, as a rule, a big three-legged earthen pot with three spouts into which the sacrifice is deposited. Besides beer, grain stalks constitute the main sacrificial offerings made in these huts. Horns of cattle are also burned in them as sacrifices (No. 45, 1913, p. 359 ff.).

776 It is characteristic of the confused conception which the Barundi have of the different personalities of their gods and spirits that they often mix up the terms and attribute the names of several gods to a single one of them. For example, one may hear them say: "Riangombe is powerful, he is Kiranga; Kagoro is also Kiranga, he is Sengoga." Kiranga is also called Rugaba, Ruhanga, Inganje, Njabaski, Indagarra, or Rukisa, or these names are used as epithets of Imana, and the word Imana itself is used as a plural concept (No. 45, 1913, p. 363). Among the names listed there are several which we already know, as shown above (p.120), from other Bahima states as the names of specific gods and spirits. In Urundi their images seem to have faded [122] so much that they are confused with one another, and the concepts people had of them seem to have been reduced to mere attributes or epithets of Imana who in any case has already become a collective term for "sacred" or "divine" rather than a personified god.

Riangombe is third among the gods. He is the supreme head of all good spirits (imandwa) whom Imana entrusted with the task of guiding human beings and protecting them against evil

2. Cults

793 787 794 756 Each of these gods is worshipped by specific cults; each has his specific priest whom he "enters" from time to time, makes him "possessed," and lets him prophesy and perform feats of magic. There are male and female priests. Allegedly the female ones remain unmarried. Divine power and inspiration and the predisposition for being possessed are in most cases passed on from father to son or daughter in the same manner as the power to heal and to raise spirits which is held by the medicine men (abafumu).

793 In Urundi these priests are called iviranga (sing. kiranga); in Ruanda, imandwa; in Kisiba, wabandwa. Among the persons who dedicate themselves to the cult of gods and spirits, the kiranga most of all has the character and functions of the priest in our sense. He has the same name as the god Kiranga (derived from the word root kira, to put in order), and he is regarded both as the representative and as the ambulatory abode of the god himself. Men or women become kiranga either because their fathers or mothers were kiranga and transmitted this talent after their death or as a result of having been struck but not killed by lightning, the sign of the power of the god (No. 19, p. 253), or they are seized by the spirit and enter a state of [828] manic possession at the Kubandwa celebration or the "sacred spear" ceremony (cf. p. 134). As soon as such happenings and conditions make their appearance, the person in question is declared a kiranga and has to officiate at the ceremonies of the holy spear which are performed on so many occasions (No. 19, pp. 462-463) and to mediate between humanity, suffering or filled with metaphysical urges, and the spirits and gods.

791 As has been mentioned before, in Ruanda the ecstatic mediators of the world of the spirits are called imandwa. They are male or female, divinely chosen mediums of one of the principal spirits, i.e., either Riangombe, Binego, Mugassa, or others. Depending on this association with a particular god, they have to adorn themselves in a fashion different from the others. They have to express themselves by growling, hissing,

794 the fraternity of the ababandwa existed long before the histori-
575 cal Riangombe. It is most probably an extremely old element
171 of Negro religion in East Africa which has been preserved in its pure form in Urundi, Uha, Ruanda, Karagwe, the eastern Congo (Bunjabungu) (No. 44, p. 291), and in a degenerate form in Unjamwesi and Ussumbwa. Many parallels to it can be found in the secret societies of the Bantu and Sudan Negroes of Loango, the Cameroons, Togo, the Gold Coast, etc. Ac-
794 cording to van der Burgt, the Kubandwa cult in Urundi is part
575 of the Bantu religion of the Bahutu and has been taken over
114 by the Batussi. However, the king may not participate in the cult while the Batwa are very dedicated to it, particularly to that of Kiranga. In his dictionary van der Burgt defines the ababandwa as a "société religieuse et secrèt" (No. 19, pp. 220, 463), but according to a more recent written communication he regards the Kubandwa not as a real "secret society" but as a gathering for a mysterious cult act to which not everyone is admitted, for example, children. Captain von Langenn, however, regards it as a religious secret society in which old sorcerers play the leading role; admission to it follows special ceremonies. Missionary Johanssen, too, describes the analogous institution in Ruanda as a "society of the initiated or of mediums" who are in contact with the world of the spirits and join Riangombe after their death, in contrast to the laymen, the insigo, who are excluded from this community (No. 39, p. 96). Father van Thiel likewise refers to the initiated persons of the Kubandwa cult in east Ussuwi as a "soeiété secrète" whose leader is the sorcerer (No. 24, p. 49).

●[793] In Ruanda a high priest (kiranga) is the head of the
794 ababandwa. He is appointed by the king, but he may also be
644 dismissed by him. In Ruanda the king appoints the mpara as his
575 assistants. They are a group of ababandwa who enjoy the privilege of offering their sacrifices to Riangombe in the kraal of the king. It is noteworthy that they are all Bahutu. This is probably a concession to the old Bantu origin of the Kubandwa cult. These mpara, in addition to the Batwa who live at the k king's court (see p. 13), are the bodyguards and the "guardians of the royal sleep," and much confidence is placed in them (No. 44, p. 292).

as the result of a denunciation before the German Resident, the entire kin group of the chief or the umufumu would be bound by law of the vendetta, and they would take terrible vengeance on the family of the "traitor" (No. 45, 1913, pp. 83-84).

Neither the umufumu nor the umubandwa is invited to officiate at the real cult acts of the Barundi people, at "divine services." These are a matter for the priest, the kiranga. Although among the Barundi one's entire life is simply a series of performances to fulfill religious requirements which affect all matters of existence, they nevertheless assign particularly great importance to two rituals. For this reason the kiranga has to officiate at them. One is the ceremony of the "sacred spear," the other is the act of erecting the small huts for ancestors and spirits, ivigabiro, akararo, ivitabo (No. 19, pp. 498-499).

The ceremony of the sacred spear is enacted at all the important events in the life of the Murundi, whenever protection against evil spirits is especially desirable. The father of the family is host at the ceremony and pays the officiating kiranga; relatives, friends, and neighbors act as assistants. The ritual takes place, for example, at the birth of a child, particularly at the birth of twins, if there is a serious sickness in the family, at weddings, joyous celebrations, funerals, etc. (No. 19, p. 516). Thus, it is a ceremony which may be sponsored by any Murundi who is in a position to afford the expense. This is not the cult gathering of the ababandwa, described on p. 124 above, which also takes place under the direction of the kiranga and is of a similar nature, but it is only performed by the secret society of the ababandwa.

Even the ordinary spear of the Murundi is considered sacred in a certain sense since it is the symbol of paternal power and the authority of the ancestors. Consequently the "sacred spear" guarded by the priest is the object of great devotion. In the point of this spear lives the spirit Kiranga, [135] or Indagarra, or Riangombe, depending on whether the spear has been dedicated to one or the other of the spirits. In most cases it is Kiranga. The shape of the spear is like that of any other, but one half of its blade is unpolished and black. If someone

7: Roscoe M-5 (1919-1920) 1924
FO42 Rundi FO42

762 When a man committed suicide, he was buried as usual;
766 but a medicine-man was summoned to tell by augury whether
787 the house had to be deserted or was still fit to live in.

RELIGION

793 I received a statement respecting the religion of the Batuse
[115] from Captain Phillips, the District Commissioner. They were,
[776] he said, monotheistic and had a chief priest who was initiated into his office by a journey up a certain mountain where there
[778] was said to be a flock of sheep sacred to the god. This was a
[782] dangerous exploit, but before a man was accepted as priest he had to go there with a sheep, which he offered to the god.

This chief priest kept all the fetishes and carried out all religious observances for the king, who kept neither fetishes nor priests about him. When there was any illness or other trouble, the king sent a bull, a sheep, or a fowl (in the case of
[787] war, a bull, a ram, or a cock) to the priest, and an augury was taken from the flow of blood and from the markings on the lungs and intestines.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE KING

The kings of Ruanda—government and taxation by the king—food of the king—wives of the king—heir to the king—death of the king—mourning—burial—accession—the king's mother and her brother

643 THE list of the kings of Ruanda was given as follows: Kigwa,
173 who came from heaven—his son, Kimanuke, who begat Randa — Merano — Kobo — Gihanga — Kalyaruanda — Ruganza — Kirimu — Kigeri — Mutabazi — Gahima — Ndahiru — Ndole — Muhenzi — Namuhesera — Sekalongoro — Huhi — Kirima — Ndabalasa — Mubamwhe — Gahiridirwa — Lwogera — Lwabugiri — Lutariridwa, who was killed by his brother Musinga, who still reigns.

692 The king's court was the court of appeal for all his subjects
645 and his council was composed of the high chiefs.

9:Maquet E-5 (1949-1951)1961 FO42 Rundi FO42

The symbol of kingship was Kalinga, the sacred drum. To possess this drum meant to be king. Kalinga was regularly sprinkled with the blood of the animals used for divination. Around Kalinga were hung the genitals of Ruanda enemies killed by the bami. Kalinga was never beaten but other drums were beaten in its honour as they were beaten for the king.[25]

(*b*) *The queen-mother*

It was essential that the role of queen-mother (*umugabekasi*) should always be fulfilled. If the mwami's mother's death occurred when her son was still living, he had to be given another 'mother'. The queen-mother had no special task, but she shared the royal prerogatives. She lived at the king's capital where she had her own court, and her protection was eagerly sought. She had herds of cattle and clients. But her role should not be regarded as independent of that of the king.

It can be said that the same kingship was realized by two persons at the same time, without any division of responsibilities or privileges. This was expressed by the term often used to designate together the mwami and his mother: the kings (*abami*). In that partnership the king, however, kept a predominant position: when he died, his mother completely lost her powers.

(*c*) *The biru*

The *biru* did not constitute a council or a board. They were dignitaries with different tasks and very strictly ranked in a fixed hierarchy. Their activities, however, in common were concerned with the preservation of ritual knowledge and the accomplishment of ceremonies essential to the existence of Ruanda and its government. This knowledge and activities were kept secret from everybody who was not a *mwiru* (singular of *biru*).

Biru were under the king's authority in the sense that he could create new offices of *mwiru* and he could dismiss one of them who had been disloyal. The royal control was limited to this. It was really the minimum without which *biru* would have been completely independent of the mwami. The offices were hereditary and even when a *mwiru* had been dismissed one of his sons succeeded him. As we have seen previously, their domains were exempt from any interference of the land- or cattle-chief.

[25] Vanhove, 1941, pp. 88 f. See the series of photographs in Maquet, 1957.